

Backyard Stamp 65



BEACH BOYS STOMP - Apr '88

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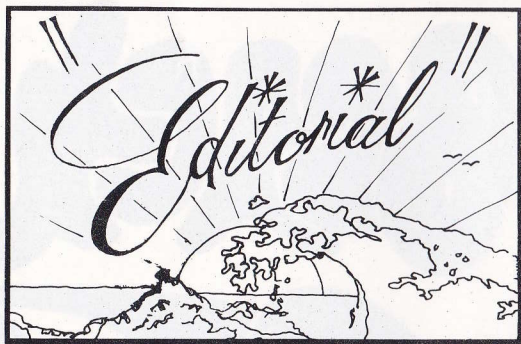
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looming on the horizon. What with
that and Pip wittering on about why haven't we got a
microwave oven yet? - I mean, a chap doesn't know which way to turn next.

Now, where did I put that 8-track cartridge.....?

CHRIS WHITE

With the ever changing list of subscribers to STOMP we sometimes forget
that new members may not be familiar with a lot of the older albums
and stories etc. So included in this issue is an article that originally
appeared in R.P.M. magazine in 1985. The Essential Beach Boys by David
Leaf and Peter Reum is an excellent guide to new and old fans alike.
No two fans are more qualified to write such an article than David and
Peter and thanks for the permission to use it.



You'd have to be mad to want to jog through Death
Valley, indeed the Q.E.D. programme in question was
entitled "Mad Dogs & An Englishman", but only at the
end did we see the real reason for Gary Shopland's
apparent lunacy. Upon his arrival at Las Vegas, in
the background a large sign clearly displayed the
object of his endeavours - yes, the Beach Boys were
playing Caesar's Palace!

Still on the subject of broadcasting, Simon Bates
was recently to be found giving us the lowdown on
the compact disc scene. In his programme "The AB of
CD's" (clever Radio 1 pun - geddit?) he explored the
future of this comparatively new but rapidly expanding
music medium. For myself I know little about CDs
except that they still go wrong, even on expensive
BBC equipment; very little improvement will be noticed
unless you have a good quality amplifier and speakers;
for the maximum benefit the music should have been
recorded digitally (which effectively eliminates 99%
of Beach Boys/related material) and finally, the
discs themselves are mostly very overpriced. Having
said that, I did see some cheapo MFP-types the other
day at £2.99 rubbing digital shoulders with a little
number called Surfin' Sounds, subtitled Jan & Dean's
Greatest Hits. Interestingly, these would seem to
include "I Get Around", "Help Me Rhonda" and "Fun,
Fun, Fun" but in any event, sixteen tracks on CD for
£3.99 can't be bad - or can it?

I only bring the subject up because compact disc
releases are more and more finding their way into
STOMP's hallowed pages and I start to panic a bit
when some joker suggests that SMILE may be released
only in that format. It's not that I'm scared of the
new technology you understand, it's just that there
is usually some higher-tech dingleberry hard on the
heels of the current one, in this case it's DAT

.. NEWS NEWS NEWS

Well, sometimes we wonder why we bother; after years of everybody
screaming for its release, we tell you that there's a 50-50 chance of
SMILE seeing daylight this year... and we get told to stop pulling legs.
OK. The doubters can skip to the next paragraph. The current status of
the SMILE project is, to be sure, less than graven in stone, but some
horrendously expensive phone calls to People Who Know About These Things
on the West Coast (i.e. Capitol Records and others) have caused the
following to emerge. Officially, SMILE appears on Capitol release sheets
as a mid-April release. Realistically, a late summer/autumn date is
more likely, given that it has to be assembled, processed and OK'd by
all the parties involved. What will be on it? Good question - according
to one source, the contents will be the original versions of the SMILE
cuts already available plus two new tracks, whilst someone else indicates
we'll be getting all the material currently circulating amongst the
archivists plus some fifteen minutes of new stuff. Most everyone seems
agreed that the legendary 7½ minute "Heroes & Villains" is a likely
inclusion.

Contrary to some reports, Brian is currently not actively involved with
the project, though once his solo sessions are wrapped up, who knows?
"Brian isn't too keen on doing any new recording, but may be willing to
add finishing touches here and there," opines A Source. Andy Paley
(currently involved with the solo LP) explains why it's going to take so
long: "We're doing as much research as we can, to make sure the thing
is right. There's about five times too much material for one album.
It's a chore, and it's going to take a long time - but it'll be great."
"The problem is, it's a bunch of unfinished, unconnected tracks," is
another observation. Although we reported that SMILE was going to be a
CD only release, the latest thinking is to issue it on LP and cassette,
though this plan is still maybe-baby... as, strictly speaking, is the
whole SMILE '88 project. It was promised us in 1966, 1967 and again in
1972, so is there any real reason to expect it in 1988? Yes: the people
we've spoken to seem cautiously optimistic, and are not noted for wild
surmise. The odds are at evens, and shortening all the time.

On the 'regular' CD front, the news is almost equally exciting, and
decidedly more certain. PET SOUNDS now has a late June release date,
and has finally been confirmed as having two bonus tracks, "Hang On To
Your Ego" (the original version of "I Know There's An Answer") and what
Andy Paley - who seems to be everywhere these days - describes as "a
backing vocal track with no lyrics for "Don't Talk (Put Your Head On My
Shoulder)". It's an absolutely gorgeous vocal thing." But it's only
about ½ minute long.

Paley has further good news for CD addicts. "The way we're hoping to
do this is that every CD should have at least one unreleased bonus cut,
because there's enough material to do it. There's outtakes from the very
beginning. Brian has a pretty good memory about a lot of this stuff,
once you get him going." Mark Linnett, an engineer who's working with
Brian and Paley on both the PET SOUNDS CD and the solo LP, adds, "and
there's the Brother/Reprise material, which the Beach Boys now own, to
be looked at as well. A SUNFLOWER CD with "Loop De Loop" as a bonus?!
Who knows... currently, the only other scheduled CD is SURPIN USA, and
that's on hold. Cynics could be forgiven for asking as to why this
sudden burst of good will after years of the band denying any possibility
of releasing archive cuts... and someone Out There has a pretty convincing
answer. "They don't have a recording contract, and no evidence that they
could land another one now. Their last record went nowhere, and they're
out of money... so this is one sure way to drum up new excitement - and
revenue. Every fan, even those that own all the albums, are going to
buy the CDs for the bonus tracks. This project looks to be pretty solid."
(For the vast majority of information preceding, we're indebted to the
International Compact Disc Exchange, a monthly newsletter out of Santa
Monica. Address is PO Box 3040, Santa Monica, CA 9040, and don't forget
an International Reply Coupon or two.

Brian has reportedly delivered the master of his solo album to Sire, and - like we said last time - a summer release looks likely, possibly on Warners as opposed to Sire. A track listing hasn't yet come our way, but it should include an acapella song entitled "One For The Boys". The Rio Grande opus will also be included on the 10-12 song set, with the CD possibly having a bonus track. Although Brian's been recording on and off since mid-1985, the vast majority of the tracks are less than a year old. "Let's Go To Heaven In My Car" and "Too Much Sugar" will not be included.

A sidelight on the "Livin' Doll" flexidisc: Brian reportedly recorded it the day before it was due to be delivered, which might explain a lot.

Of late, Brian's studio partners have included Jeff Lynne and Russ Teitleman (with whom he co-wrote "Guess I'm Dumb" some 24 years ago) as co-producers, and Carol King as a backing vocalist. Whether any of the tracks from these sessions will turn up on the album is a damn good question.

Come summer, we should be able to rush down to our local record store and ask for the new Beach Boys single. Entitled "Kokomo", it hails from whatever the next Tom Cruise film is called, and is a Melcher/Love/Phillips composition. That's Phillips as in Papa John. Label and B-side are as yet unknown.

A glance at the concert schedules for summer shows that the band aren't - at the time of writing - touring very much at all during July and August. Doubtless dates will fill in, but it does seem a mite late in the season... At some recent dates (Vegas for one), Brian has stood in for Alan, singing "Surfer Girl", "Help Me Rhonda", "Wouldn't It Be Nice" and "In My Room".

The Elton John session featuring Bruce & Carl - reported last issue - was for a song entitled "Brian Wilson Sings". Elt's new album was due this summer, but now has to be re-recorded as someone is reported to have wiped the master tape! How? The whole tape?!

LATE NEWS... LATE NEWS...LATE NEWS...

Brian's album, with the title now confirmed as LOVE AND MERCY is now slated for a US and UK release in June (but don't bank on it...). The label is still a good question - it could be on Sire, Warners or even Reprise. The credited producers are Brian, Andy Paley, Russ Teitleman and Jeff Lynne, and almost sure tracks are "Love And Mercy", "Rio Grande", "There's So Many" (a.k.a. "Up In The Sky"), "Night Time", "Let It Shine", "Melt Away" and "Baby Let Your Hair Grow Long". The latter two titles hail from way back in 1985, when a BW solo album was first mooted (and promptly dismissed by us, amongst others - so we wuz wrong...). The album will be preceeded in the US on May 10th by a 45. Like to know the title? So would we - a radio promo CD of "Rio Grande" will be sent out to radio stations simultaneously.

PET SOUNDS CD update: the package will include an 8-page booklet penned by the very man who should be doing it, David Leaf, and will also include PET SOUNDS session photographs.

Finally, news of a new Beach Boys bootleg has racked our ears. Entitled BEACH BOYS GEMS, it's apparently a double album. More than this, we do not know... STOP PRESS.....

MIKE & AGD Brian's LP. title has changed again, it's now 'BRIAN WILSON'.

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We are only too aware that many of you are new to the readership of our magazine. What a marvellous period we are about to witness as we proceed into 1988. It will without doubt be the most exciting year since 1966.

Not so long ago I put together a cassette with a B side containing all but two Brian Wilson lead vocals. It originates from the summer of 1983. The A side was mainly up tempo with the B side starting with ballads. The first half of the tape runs unchanged from '83 and is thus: "Keep An Eye On Summer", "The Warmth Of The Sun", then the best of all "Don't Worry Baby", "Let Him Run Wild", "God Only Knows", "Wouldn't It Be Nice". Then in December last I changed it from then on to run the four tracks from the B side of the TODAY album, "Please Let Me Wonder", "I'm So Young", "Kiss Me Baby" and "She Knows Me Too Well", finishing with "Happy Endings".

As I listened to the tape, and this was only the second side, time after time more than ever I came to appreciate Brian's voice and the clarity of it. Doubtless of course, he could out-sing anyone else from the 1960's, group wise. What an immense shame more importance hadn't been placed on the vocal ability in rock n' roll. It can be argued that the best vocal group were the Association, however they achieved nothing like the success of The Beach Boys. Certainly Scott Walker of The Walker Brothers possessed a marvellous voice but he couldn't match the range of Brian's ability. Brian could sing as if he were a Nightingale on a beautiful summer's evening, crystal clear and so pure.

Brian's life since the mid '60s is well documented and when one delves deeper as a fan one discovers periods which could simply break one's heart. All this fabulous ability, the most talented artist in rock 'n' roll, seemed to be lost forever. Then came the 1980's; how fortunate we were that Brian was still with us let alone making music. Then arrived news of the almost unbelievable, he was to make a solo album. To the purist of course, his second since 1966.

When eventually it arrives and this is of no anguish to me, as it surely will sometime in 1988, be warned, do not expect too much. Although news has come from several different sources that even they are surprised at how well things are going as far as vocals are concerned. Even this past week (ending March 12th) during a phone call from Los Angeles it was recounted to me that if this person had known Brian could be musically where he is now, they wouldn't have believed it. Even better was the opinion that if the next two years achieve as much as the last two, then who knows what might be possible.

No, I haven't heard the album or any of the tracks, I don't need to or even want to. My joy is simpler than that and my view is shared by our noble editor. I'll listen to the record when Brian is happy to release it, no matter how long it takes. It'll need more than one listening that's for sure and how it is received by fan or reviewer is of no significance.

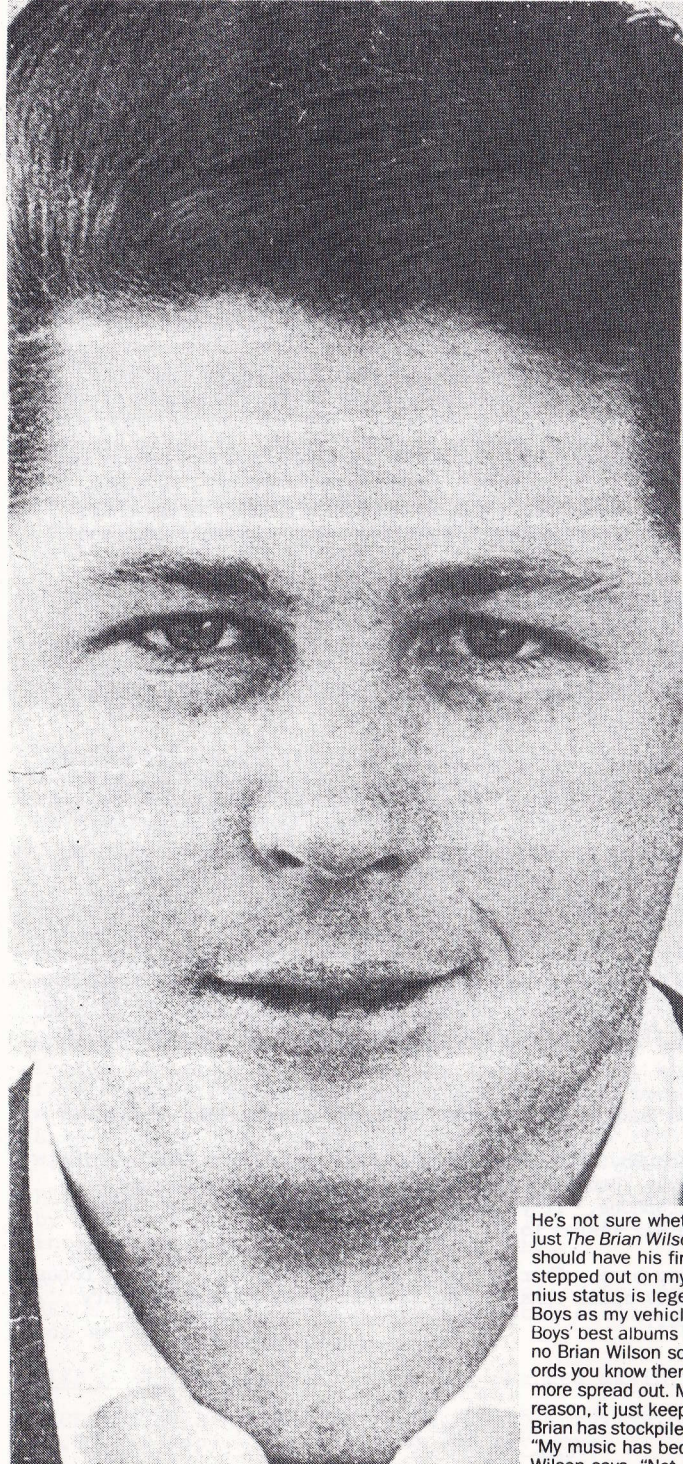
If Brian never made another record I am happy because when I listen to all those records, and there is simply so much, I realise that we have had more than enough.

Yes, Brian is my favourite Beach Boy. As always when I'm out Dejayng a '60s evening, in fact even tonight I shall play "Don't Worry Baby" and during the instrumental break I shall add over the microphone, "If you're not too familiar with this record, listen to the vocals but above all listen to the guy's voice singing lead."

Thank you Brian, for still being here. Sharing your wonderful music with us is a bonus, Your place in the history of rock music remains, in Cricket terms you are the Gary Sobers - the finest all-rounder!!

Wishing You Every Happiness.

ROY GUDGE



Brian Wilson Solos!

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BRIAN IS SEATED at the piano. At this precise moment, a recent arrival christened "Love and Mercy" demands a hearing.

"The song is very simple," Brian warns. "Don't expect 'Good Vibrations.'"

He begins to play, one hand bearing pop-elegant chords in a characteristic pulse, the other counter-punching to enliven the rhythm. It only takes a couple of measures for the thrill of recognition to set in. The manner and order of one chord's fall into the next, the voicings, the phrasing of melody—it's not "Good Vibrations," nor anything else you've heard before, but it's unmistakably Brian Wilson's. His voice, restored from gravel by care and desire, soars, makes it all sound personal. Which it probably is.

Love and mercy that's what you need tonight

Show love and mercy to you and your friends tonight

"Brian's Back"—thus have his periodic resurrections been celebrated and ballyhooed and marketed across the last dark decade and a half. Back to *where*, though, is never actually said; most likely, no one really knows. Let's not be premature—let's just say he's on his way from a place he hated to a place he can manage to live, and that this much is clear: When Brian Wilson makes music, he is quite completely *here*.

The last notes ring and fade, and Brian turns from the keyboard and smiles. Not a crazy smile.

"That's it," he says. "Isn't that nice?"

But the question is only rhetorical.

He's not sure whether to call it *California* or *10,000 B.C.* or just *The Brian Wilson Album*, but the **Beach Boys'** guiding light should have his first solo work out by year's end. "I've never stepped out on my own," says the man whose reclusive-genius status is legendary. "But I refuse to rely on the Beach Boys as my vehicle." In effect, though, weren't the Beach Boys' best albums **Brian Wilson** albums? He shrugs. "There is no Brian Wilson sound," he declares. "On **Phil Spector's** records you know there's going to be a Wall of Sound; I'm a little more spread out. My brain doesn't want to shut off. For some reason, it just keeps yappin'." From the more than 100 songs Brian has stockpiled, a dozen or so will show up on the album. "My music has become a little more mellow over the years," Wilson says. "Not so trite and plastic. I've made some good records, and I've made some plastic records. I had to eat the plastic ones." But amazingly, Brian Wilson seems to have emerged with his musical appetite intact.

BRIAN WILSON

Brian Wilson, 33, is seated before a handsome Hammond B-3 organ in the center of the Beach Boys' splendid, 24-track Brother Studio on Fifth Street in Santa Monica, his massive form suspended in the cold blue expanse of a giant circular stained glass window depicting our solar system which looms behind him. The air is electric with tension and Brian's thick-fingered hands are trembling so horribly they can scarcely find their proper places on the keys. Mercifully, the organ is not turned on.

"Come on, Bri," Stan Love cajoles softly. "Play your new song. Play 'California Feeling.'"

I hardly recognize the person before me. He bears no resemblance whatsoever to the lanky, dough-faced teenager who sat atop the bright yellow, palm-festooned pick-up truck on the cover of *Surfin' Safari*, one thin hand clutching a surfboard and the other shielding his eyes from the beach glare as he peered out at the rolling Pacific. Fifteen years and 75 million records later, Brian Wilson, the singer/composer/producer *extraordinaire* who elevated one of the most phenomenally successful vocal and musical groups in history to a permanent place in American folklore, is slumped over a silent keyboard in a soundproof room a half-hour drive from where that first album photo was shot; overweight, overwrought, and scared shitless.

"Come on, Brian," Stan continues. "Play it. It's a great song."

Stan Love, sandy-haired former forward with the Baltimore Bullets of the National Basketball Association and the younger brother of Beach Boys lead vocalist Mike Love, is Brian Wilson's first cousin, confidant and salaried chauffeur. He is also his bodyguard. Right now, skinny Stan, elbows on the organ top and eyes riveted on his stout responsibility, is trying his damndest to put his pal at ease.

Since all of this is for my benefit, I decide to pitch in. "What's the song like?" I ask cheerfully, pulling up one of the folding chairs scattered about the neat, spacious room.

"I don't know," Brian murmurs. "It's got a feeling to it... there's something about it that's very warm. It's sort of a Bill Medley-Brian Wilson combination..."

"How does the tune go?" I prod him gently. "What are the lyrics?"

Suddenly Brian straightens up, rolls his hefty shoulders back and shows a brave, childlike smile. "Heck," he allows. "I should... I should just sing it!"

He flicks the power switch on the organ, adjusts the volume with the foot pedal and for a split-second I don't want to hear the song. After growing up blissfully absurd to the strains of "Surfin' U.S.A.," and falling in love under the boardwalk with "Wouldn't It Be Nice" resounding overhead, I don't want to see Brian Wilson blow it, any more than I'd want to see Beaver Cleaver get beaten up or Sandra Dee take a dump.

But, as a result of a two-month long series of events too byzantine to recount, this impossible genius and myself find ourselves poised on the brink of what could be one of the bigger bummers of either of our personal lives. Brian's out to tell the world that he's still a *scientist* in the studio and I'm spending a sunny spring afternoon witnessing the first cruel rites. The two of us are shooting this pipeline together, and this time around, I'm praying he has that sonata.

Brian's rubbery fingers hover above the Hammond's bared teeth. Fearful, uncertain, they stiffen and he forms two chords, falters, and then begins to sing:

I was walking down the beach in San Onofre,

It was such a beautiful day.

The wind was blowing through my hair,

And the sun dances in the morning sky.

When you're driving through L.A.

Ladies and gentlemen, the beach is back.

Fortunately Brian had cheered up by the time we reached his home. He sat down at an old upright in his living room and whipped off three songs he'd written since June. He seemed amazingly confident, singing various parts, playing the piano, even smiling occasionally. One song was called "Hey, Little Tomboy" ("time you turned into a girl"). Another, "I Want to Pick You Up" ("cause you're still a baby to me"). The third, the one I liked best, was a tribute to his wife and was entitled simply "Marilyn Rovell":

*So glad I married a girl named Marilyn Rovell
So glad that I can say so far it's workin' out so well
She gets up at nine, while I'm sleepin' she's shopping
with Bobi or Dee*

(That's short for Dianne)

*If only she knew how happy it makes me to see her
carry my baby*

*Mary, oh Mary baby
Oh Mary, my Mary baby
Oh Mary, oh Mary baby
Oh Mary, oh Mary*

*And sometimes friends will ask us what the heck is
your secret*

*Part luck, part love, and we don't spend our money,
we keep it*

*And when I come home I say honey please fix me
something good to eat*

(She's right there cookin' it)

*If only she knew how happy it makes me to see her
carry my baby*

Sure, the words are pretty homey, but then that's about the only input Brian's had in the last few years. And the music—pshaw!—days later I was still humming it, it was so delicious. And that was just Brian and the piano; who knows how great it'll sound with the Beach Boys' voices and those funky instruments and the sound effects and echo and some kind of fantastic fadeout?

That is the miracle of his music. It just grabs you and follows you around like a little angel. It makes you feel good and gives you hope. It certainly gave me hope for Brian. In June he feared he was washed up as a writer, now here were three gems in three months—talk about progress! By the time I left his house I was convinced that, despite his sickness, despite his cure, Brian Wilson shall rise and shine again.

The man at the piano spins around in his chair when we enter the room, and asks if we'd like to hear a couple of his latest tunes. He puts on a pair of horn-rimmed glasses and begins to sift through the sheets of lyrics on the piano easel, a flurry of titles flicking by: "I've Been Through This One Before," "The Lost Song," "What's Wrong With Starting Now," "Walking On Water," "A Bad Time Soon Forgotten," "Baby Let Your Hair Grow Long," "Black Widow," "Melt Away," "Wondering What You're Up To Now."

He settles on three songs—"You," "Water Builds Up" and "Angel." After another flourish of scattered chords, he begins to play a slow, bittersweet ballad, singing along with an assured self-absorption:

Don't let her know she's an angel

Don't let her know that you see

Don't let her know that she's special

Especially that she touches me

It's a lovely piece, similar in its textures to "Caroline No," from *Pet Sounds*. "You" is another strong ballad, and "Water Builds Up" is an exuberant number with an energy roughly akin to "You're So Good To Me," or interestingly enough, "Breakaway," the song he wrote with his father. Perhaps not coincidentally, it's an imagistic exploration of anger and how to manage it.

"I'm finally going to do a solo album," he boasts, as he finishes "Water Builds Up." "I should have done one a long time ago but I didn't have the confidence or the discipline. I was on too big of a bum trip.

"We're still handpicking the songs," he says, indicating Dr. Landy. "We're still checking them out. But I'm gonna do it all myself, I think. I'm gonna do it all in the booth, by machine. I'm gonna use the new digital equipment they have now. I'm thinking of calling it *Nighttime*, which has always been the time of day I like best.

7

LETTERS

PO Box 47
Doha, Qatar
ARABIAN GULF

(i.e. the desert - or a
very big beach if
you're positive thinking!)

Dear STOMP

COME ON GUYS!

You're not serious. You want me to spring another £8 to read things like:

" - honesty brings the realisation that had it been the Fat Boys and Pat Boone,
the sales would have been the same..." (- and this is only the editorial!),
" - a lead vocal by Little Richard who obviously had other things on his mind - ",
" - I was expecting the Second Coming and it never quite arrived - ",
" - but would you buy it were it not BB releated? -".

Really fellahs. For a fan club you're as down as the UK weather. OK maybe we're
spoilt for sunshine here with 360 days of it a year, but it does mean we take our
weekends very seriously, and that means the beach. I've been broadcasting weekends
here for 4 years now and giving the happy campers a solid helping of BB harmonies
every show. And they haven't thrown me out yet. I go on the air at 10 am and if I
haven't played a BB track by 10.30, there are complaints.!

Result?

1. Wipeout was the most popular release of the year - because, Thomases, of the BEACH
BOYS and not the fat variety.
2. There were three copies of Happy Endings floating around our radio station.
(QBS Radio 97.5 FM if you're in the area?) within 48 hours of its release in
UK. Our listeners loved it! Even our youngest disc jockey, a 19-year old jungle
music freak, was playing it. And the Little Richard lead really wasn't that bad.

Alright; here's my cheque for £8 - but no more downers, OK?

God only knows, the Beach Boys need all the help they can get with a history like
theirs of incompetent management. Surely STOMP should be leading the way in efforts
to rejuvenate popularity. Hang ten.

CHRIS THORNTON

-oOo-

Dear STOMP

Just got your latest issue, and not only did I enjoy it very much, but the timing of it
couldn't have been better because the reprint of the 'SMILE' sessions article coincides
with the fact that I've just begun to work for Capitol as a consultant on the possible
release of a 'SMILE' CD later this year.

On the BW front, lots to report. His version of "Goodnight Irene" is on a Woody
Guthrie tribute record that should be released by CBS any day.

The PET SOUNDS CD, with liner notes by me, will be out in early June.

And Brian's solo album, now titled LOVE & MERCY, is scheduled for a late June release.

I've just had the privilege of spending three days in the studio with the man himself
as he did the final mix of the record, and it sounds fantastic. I really believe it's
his best album since PET SOUNDS. I hope you folks over there like it as much as I do.

DAVID LEAF

-oOo- 8

Dear STOMP

I wonder if any other STOMP readers have come across The Dukes of Stratosphere?
"The Dukes" are the alter-ego of English band XTC, and the first (mini) album,
'25 O'clock' which was released on April Fools Day 1985, was a tribute to/parody of,
late 60's psychedelic rock. The single 'Mole From The Ministry' received a fair bit
of airplay and XTC's label, Virgin, were so pleased with the sales that they pressed
them for a follow up. The second album 'Psonic Psumspots' was released last year,
and is a collection of songs in the styles of Lennon, McCartney, The Hollies, The
Byrds etc. and the final track 'Pale & Precious' - is the Beach Boys.

Although the falsetto vocals/harmonies aren't as strong as the Beach Boys, the overall
arrangement and structure of the song is a superb example of, say, late sixties/turn
of the decade, Beach Boys. It includes a Carl Wilson style lead vocal, sung over a
soft keyboard backing, typical Mike Love style bass parts, and the bass lines and
percussion are pure Brian. There's even a section near the end of the track, almost
lifted straight from the closing segment of 'Good Vibrations' - it's well worth
checking out as is the whole album. (Note: the relevant CD is called 'Chips from the
Chocolate Fireball' and contains both Dukes albums).

GRAHAM WOOD

-oOo-

Dear STOMP

It would seem the Beach Boys music can be changed dramatically by the production given
to each individual recording. I agree with Stephen Ridley's views on CARL AND THE
PASSIONS (STOMP 64) about the quality of the material on the album, but let's be honest
some of those songs suffered from a lousy production job. I haven't met anyone who
doesn't admit that good songs should never have been treated that way. And what about
the M.I.U. album!!

There's also stories I've heard that BEACH BOYS LOVE YOU produced by Brian was virtually
re-produced in full before it was released for public acceptance. And what about the
'86 album BEACH BOYS with its over the top electronic/drum machine approach. What I
didn't like about this release was hearing Carl singing backing vocals over his lead
(two voices at the same time!!)

I still like 'em all but if they could all have been delivered like HOLLAND I'd die
a happier man.

JOHN

Dear STOMP

I'll never forget the day I purchased PET SOUNDS in the summer of 1976. I was on
holiday at Caister-on-Sea, near Gt Yarmouth with some friends when I cam across this
LP. Although the holiday flat we were in had no stereo I persuaded a local disc
jockey to play it before the disco really got busy. It says so much for the quality
of the music that loads of punters requested to hear the songs all night long. For one
brief magical moment it seemed that the boys were more important musically than the
'stars' of that year. I was in my glory.

Later, about one year to be more precise, I was embroiled in my first love affair.
(You know what they say about first love!) The lady in question had no time for the
group's music until the middle of 1978. She decided to move to London and that
entailed casting yours truly to the side. I was devastated. I played PACIFIC OCEAN
BLUE and PET SOUNDS so much that the vinyl must have been worn out. I even stole the
lyrics of "Caroline No", substituting the girl in question's name for Caroline.
The effect was devastating. I was smeared with kisses and promises of undying love
and fidelity, which, of course, was my intention. Unfortunately the master plan
backfired. Such was her new found love that she started to listen to the music of the
boys to please me. The first album she purchased was, you've guessed it, PET SOUNDS.
The cat was out the bag and I was out of her life shortly after. However, I still
have the music and that is what matters most.

DAVY

Beach Boy finds new way to have fun, fun, fun, a Vette

Newsmakers

ODDS AND ENDS: Capitol says it's going to release the Beach Boys' legendary "Smile" LP this spring. Until now, tracks have only come out here and there or on bootlegs. Asked recently if he was sorry "Smile" didn't come out in 1967, Brian Wilson replied, "Nah. It was too weird." ...

THE BEACH BOYS' Mike

Love made the news last week when he scolded fellow rock 'n' roll artists Paul McCartney, Bruce Springsteen, Bob Dylan and Mick Jagger when they were all being inducted in to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

"But isn't this an auto column?" you ask.

Patience, friends.

If Love was testy at the ceremonies, it wasn't because he was unhappy with his wheels. Earlier this month, Love picked up a new metallic blue '88 Corvette convertible from Fitzpatrick Chevrolet in Concord.

The Beach Boys' contract with Chevrolet's Heartbeat of America tour stipulates that each member of the group and their manager gets a new Chevy of his choice. All have ordered their cars from the Concord dealership. Brian Wilson, Carl Wilson and Al Jardine are awaiting Corvettes. Camping aficionado Bruce Johnston is getting a Suburban.

Love, who flew down from Calgary, Alberta, to pick up his car before driving it to L.A., first met owner Dennis Fitzpatrick when the Beach Boys performed at the Pavilion last year. Fitzpatrick was backstage at the concert as part of a Chevrolet promotion when he met and became friends with Love.

Fitzpatrick said he wasn't surprised by Love's speech at the rock ceremony. "He's one of the more blunt people I've met. He says whatever's on his mind."

And he'll have fun, fun, fun, till his daddy takes the Corvette away.

"Brian Wilson has made a miraculous recovery with the help of Dr. Landy, psychologically, physically and financially. He's in the best shape he's ever been in his life," says Wilson's lawyer, John Mason.

Wilson may also be close to releasing the legendary *Smile* album, said to be his masterwork. Though the original tapes were thought to be lost (did Wilson destroy them in a rash of paranoia?), Capitol Records reportedly plans to release the album this summer after Wilson spends some more studio time reassembling it.

Electric Light Boys: At Larrabee Sound, Jeff Lynne worked with Brian Wilson on "Let It Shine," for Wilson's forthcoming Sire album.

Also, Brian Wilson was in tracking for his solo Warner Bros. album. Russ Tittelman produced; Mark Linett ran the board.

Drug-troubled Beach Boy Brian Wilson has spent £600,000 and hired four producers for his solo album, and still he's not happy with it ...



MIKE LOVE of the Beach Boys, right, stops by to pick up his new Corvette convertible from owner Dennis Fitzpatrick, left, and finance manager Jerry Fitzpatrick Jr. of Fitzpatrick Chevrolet.

Barbie, Beach Boys reach out to new generation

By BOB GREENE

There's a new Barbie Doll on the nation's toy store shelves. As you may or may not know, Barbie Dolls come in almost countless permutations, the idea being that children will buy as many different Barbies as Mattel can produce. This new Barbie is called "California Dream Barbie."

That's not the point, though. The point is that — on the front of the box holding the California Dream Barbie — there is a blurb saying that included with the Barbie Doll is a Beach Boys record.

Not only that — it's a Beach Boys record devoted to Barbie.

For some reason this information was a little too much for me to deal with. So I called the headquarters of Mattel Toys Inc. and spoke with a man named Scott Masline, marketing manager for Barbie Dolls.

Yes, said Masline, when you buy a California Dream Barbie (suggested retail price: \$9.95) there is a floppy, thin-vinyl record inside the box. The record is called "Living Doll," and it is the Beach Boys' tribute to Barbie.

"It just made sense," Masline said. "When we came up with the whole theme of the California lifestyle for this new Barbie, we asked ourselves

what would a good element be? The Beach Boys are very California. So we worked out a deal with them, and they wrote and recorded 'Living Doll.' And now when you buy the California Dream Barbie you get the Beach Boys singing 'Living Doll,' too."

I'm not sure why I was reacting to this the way I was. There was Elvis, there were the Beatles, there were the Beach Boys ... and now the Beach Boys are making records that are sold with Barbie Dolls?

"It certainly can't hurt sales," Masline said. "On the toy store shelf, that's got to catch Mom's eye — that notation on the box that says there's a Beach Boys record inside. Mom probably grew up listening to the Beach Boys, and this gives her one more reason to buy the California Dream Barbie for her child."

Brian Wilson, who was responsible for the Beach Boys' most memorable songs, shares a writing credit on "Living Doll" with his much-publicized psychiatrist, Dr. Eugene E. Landy. Wilson is listed as the producer of the record; Dr. Landy is listed as the executive producer.

"We're very pleased with the song," Mattel's Masline said. "It is one minute and 59 seconds long, and the word 'Barbie' appears 16 times."

Asked to describe what "Living Doll" sounds like, Masline said the song has a "melodic pace, kind of slow." He compared the sound to past Beach Boys hits "In My Room" and "Surfer Girl."

After talking with Masline, I had a

In any case, hearing the Beach Boys sing about a Barbie Doll was a unique experience, to say the least.

chance to listen to "Living Doll." Actually, I found the tempo to be snappier — closer to "Wendy" and "Little Honda." In any case, hearing the Beach Boys sing about a Barbie Doll was a unique experience, to say the least.

The Beach Boys sing that Barbie gives them that "same old feelin', that gets our hearts to reelin'." They sing that they and Barbie "splash in the surf, the whole beach is our turf." Throughout the song they refer to "Barbie, Barbie, you living doll." And they sing, "Oh Barbie, you are my California dream; you are yummy like ice cream."

Masline said he was not at liberty to discuss the financial arrangements between Mattel and the Beach Boys.

But upon reflection, I figured something out. The Beach Boys have not had a million-selling single since the late 1960s. They are still an enormously popular concert attraction, but virtually all of the songs they sing on stage are the ones that were hits prior to 1970.

BEACH BOYS "SMILE" AT LAST

Capitol Records will be putting out the **BEACH BOYS'** never released legendary *Smile* album (circa '66-'67). Brian Wilson has been in the studio working on the project. It's slated for a spring release -- more details on this historic project as they become available.

The Boys' dolly girl

THE Beach Boys, once one of America's finest groups, have been forced to boost their flagging careers by recording a promotional single about the Barbie Doll.

Mike Love and Co., who haven't written a decent chart hit since the early Seventies, have recorded a single called *Living Doll*. The record is being given away free with toy company Mattel's latest ghastly creation, The Californian Dream Barbie.

"They didn't do it for the money," claims a spokesman for the group, who are believed to have been paid a six figure sum for the single.

"The dolls are a big hit with children, aged four to seven, and the Beach Boys felt this was an ideal opportunity for them to reach a new audience."

Adds a new meaning to cradle-snatching, doesn't it?

The Beach Boys did a series of overdubs and mixes. The single "Happy Endings," with Little Richard singing lead vocal, is scheduled for release on Brother Records. Terry Melcher produced the sessions with help from Bruce Johnston, Mike Love, and Al Jardine of the Beach Boys. Keith Wechsler was recording and mixing engineer. Lehmer and Jeffrey Kliement assisted.

Ba-Ba-Ba-Barbara Ann met wop-bop-alou-bop-a-wang-bang-boom last month at Russian Hill Recording in San Francisco. How's this for a dream pairing: the Beach Boys with Little Richard handling lead vocals on a song, "Happy Endings," which was produced by Terry Melcher and Bruce Johnston. Another '60s legend, session sax man Steve Douglas, arranged the horns. The single will be released this fall.

I asked Scott Masline how many California Dream Barbies he expected Mattel would sell.

"Each Barbie sells about two million units worldwide," he said. "In the United States, we sell well over a million of each Barbie."

So — if the California Dream Barbie Doll sells as well as expected, the Beach Boys will have their first million-selling single in more than 15 years?

"I hadn't thought of it that way," Masline said. "But I suppose that's right."

A spokesman for the Beach Boys said all the members of the group had been in favor of recording "Living Doll." "They all wanted to do it," he said. "No one argued against it."

Of the song, the spokesman said: "It actually is pretty good." He said the Beach Boys were paid a flat fee for "Living Doll" and would not receive royalties based on the sales performance of the California Dream Barbie. He acknowledged that, because of the popularity of Barbie Dolls, "Living Doll" is virtually guaranteed to be a million-seller. But, he said, the Beach Boys will not receive a gold record for it, because the way it is being sold (inside Barbie Doll boxes) does not meet music-industry requirements for gold-record certification.

"The Beach Boys feel that it was a good idea to make the record because it gives children who are 5 and 6 years old a chance to hear their music," the spokesman said. "The Beach Boys feel that this is where their new audience is."

Capitol To 'Smile' At Beach Boys Fans

More than 21 years after the project was scrapped, the Beach Boys' *Smile* album is being released by Capitol Records.

A tentative April 19 release date was cited by the label, although a Capitol spokeswoman said it would probably be pushed back.

The album will be released in all three formats.

Brian Wilson, who allegedly burned some of the original tapes in 1967, is involved with the remixing of the album.

No track listing is available, and it is unknown whether Capitol will use the original *Smile* album cover.

It is also unknown if *Smile* would replace *Smiley Smile* in the Beach Boys' catalog.

That album was released instead of *Smile* in 1967, and is still in print by Capitol.

Smile was intended to be the followup to the Beach Boys' groundbreaking 1966 LP *Pet Sounds*. Most of the album was recorded, but the project was abandoned by the Beach Boys when Brian Wilson found himself unable to work on it any longer due to mounting personal problems. The album's showpiece was to be a complex suite called "The Elements" but Wilson allegedly destroyed those tapes when a fire broke out across the street from the studio while the group worked on the "Fire" portion of the piece. Most of *Smile* has since emerged on other legitimate albums and bootlegs.

We hope to have more information on the release of *Smile* in the next issue.

Jeff Tamarkin



(L-R) David Foster, Roy Orbison, Beach Boy Mike Love, BMI Los Angeles Performing Rights Executive Director Barbara Cane, Jeff "Skunk" Baxter and Stephen Stills.

THE ESSENTIAL THE BEACH BOYS

By David Leaf & Peter Reum

Everybody knows the Beach Boys music. If you've been listening to rock 'n' roll radio for the past twenty-five years, you couldn't help but hear the group's "surf, cars & fun" sounds.

However, this article is written for those who are interested in going beyond the hits... a journey worth making as the Beach Boys guiding light, Brian Wilson, is generally acknowledged to be one of the great writer/arranger/producers of the '60s... a reputation built not just on the hits but on some terrific and long-overlooked albums. This buyer's guide is constructed to tell you which albums are worth owning and where you can get them.

In attempting to provide the novice Beach Boys fan with a list of the indispensable music created during the group's career, it may seem strange that it's taken two people to provide that information. However, rather than giving you a didactic "one man's opinion," our dialogue in preparing this article has made for a more comprehensive and representative selection.

In choosing the best music of an artist as important to popular music as Brian Wilson, it's tempting to recommend that you should listen to all of the Beach Boys' records from 1962-1973. Our job is to cut through to the heart of the art so that you can truly appreciate Wilson's growth as a composer, arranger and producer without having to listen to every single surfing song. What follows is, we hope, what you will find to be a collection of music not only worth assembling but also one worth listening to over and over again.

Considering how many albums the Beach Boys have recorded, it's sad to note that of the 31 original releases, only eight of them are still in print with the original artwork and track line-ups. Of those, by far the most noteworthy is the classic *Pet Sounds*, the album Paul McCartney credits as the inspiration for the Beatles own *Sgt. Pepper's*.

Besides having so few records in print, the Beach Boys probably hold the record for most repackages. Since 1966, Capitol Records in particular has been recycling the Beach Boys' biggest hits into various conglomerations of greatest hits albums, the most well-known being *Endless Summer*, the 1974 2-record set that went to number one and revitalized the Beach Boys performing career, turning them from a moderately successfully and very interesting cult band into a mobile and lucrative jukebox.

Certainly, the easiest way to begin your collection is with the hits packages. Three from Capitol are mandatory, even if the cover art is highly forgettable. *Endless Summer*, *Spirit of America*, and *Sunshine Dream* provide the cream of the crop. These two-record sets are

chock full of virtually every essential 45 RPM hit (and miss) from the Beach Boys' 1960s recording career. Additionally, *Sunshine Dream* has the bonus (penalty?) track of the group's 1981 top-twenty hit, "The Beach Boys Medley."

Besides the re-packages, many of the group's albums from before 1970 are available as reissues with the original cover art but on some of the disks, several tracks have been deleted, so if you're a completist, be careful. Probably the least damaged of these bastardizations are *All Summer Long* and *Surfer Girl*, important albums that are not missing anything that's crucial. In its curious wisdom, Capitol followed these half-baked reissues with an album called *Be True To Your School*, on which some (but not all) of the deleted tracks appear. You try and figure it out. It makes no sense to us, other than a misguided record company cashing in every which way it can.

However, it's certainly to Capitol's credit that there are a half-dozen re-issues in print that are not only complete packages, but have been pressed as Brian Wilson cut them. That means mono when he worked in mono, and

stereo when he and the group worked in stereo. For those who have suffered with duophonic and rechanneled stereo, this is not an unimportant consideration.

Everything the Beach Boys recorded for Warner Brothers between 1970 and 1977 (some seven studio albums and one two-record live set) has been out-of-print for years and the rights to those records have reverted back to the Beach Boys. The group's first two albums for CBS Records are also no longer in the catalogue, although there is little on those 1979 & 1980 releases to merit their being diligently tracked down.

The good news is that much of the best of the Warner years and the best tunes from those CBS albums have been collected on a fine CBS anthology, the hard-to-find *Ten Years of Harmony* (which also includes a couple of unreleased songs, notably "San Miguel" and one tune from Dennis Wilson's fine solo album). The only problem we find with the above-mentioned two record set is that the tracks are not arranged in chronological order, so while the selection is strong, there is no way that the newcomer to this music could chart the group's career through the 1970s.

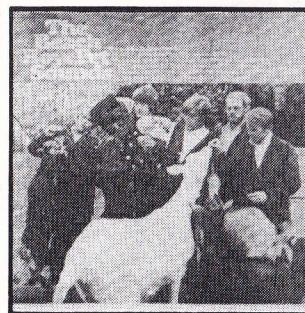
So as you can see, there is much missing in the available catalogue of Beach Boys music, at least in the United States. Fortunately, the active import market is filled with Beach Boys product. Between Japan, Germany, and England, more than two dozen of the group's original albums are in print, and between the cut-out bins and the used and collector's stores, it's not going to be difficult to get any Beach Boys album that piques your curiosity.

Looking at the Beach Boys career from the beginning, none of the first four albums (released in 1962 & 1963) can be called "essential." All of the strong songs from those disks



The Beach Boys

From the collection of PETER REUM



can be found on the Capitol compilations, and at that point, the Beach Boys were still more a singles band.

However, Brian Wilson's progress was fast and remarkable. It took less than two years for him to move from the crude "Surfin'" to the elegant "In My Room" on the group's third LP, *Surfer Girl*. It's on this record that we're introduced to Brian Wilson as an accomplished composer who can address issues of the heart, not just of the surf and sand. Besides the title track and the hot-rodding "Little Deuce Coupe," this disk features the true classic, "In My Room" and the spirited favorites, "Hawaii" and "Catch A Wave."

Curiously, "Little Deuce Coupe" appears again as the title tune of the next studio release, a car "concept" album that even with its repeats is notable for "Be True To Your School," "Spirit of America," and the group's first real a capella blowout, "A Young Man Is Gone."

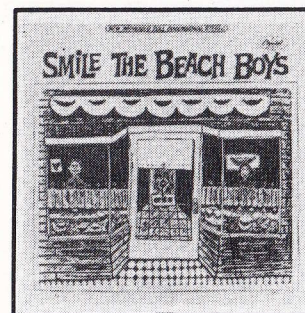
It's in 1964 that Brian Wilson reached his first peak. In that year, the group released four LPs, at least one of which must be in your collection.

Taking them chronologically, the first new issue of '64 was *Shut Down Volume II (Volume I)* was a Capitol rip-off of the Beach Boys car hits. *Volume II's* strength lay in the hits, "Fun, Fun Fun" and "Don't Worry Baby" and the beautiful ballad, "The Warmth of the Sun."

Next came *All Summer Long*, and it was on this record that Brian Wilson put it all together from start to finish for the first time. "I Get Around," "Hushabye," "Wendy," "The Girls On The Beach" and "Don't Back Down" were among the standouts that made this the best Beach Boys album to date. This disk is a "must."

The other two 1964 releases are a lot of fun, but neither is necessary to the new Beach Boys fan. The *Beach Boys Concert* and *The Beach Boys' Christmas Album* are worth hearing once, but if you can't find 'em, don't lose any sleep. However, if you're a particular fan of boy choirs, you'll want to get the *Christmas LP*, with its terrific vocal arrangements and, of course, Brian's rock-charged original, "Little St. Nick."

In 1965, Brian Wilson was two out of three, as far as the essential Beach Boys goes. Both *The Beach Boys Today* and *Summer Days*



(*And Summer Nights!!*) are vital. In particular, the *Today* album showcases Brian Wilson at his most versatile and approaching the peak of his powers. Tracks like "When I Grow Up" and "Please Let Me Wonder" are two of the best recordings he's ever made. *Summer Days* was Brian's last concession to the group's "fun" image, and with "California Girls" and "Help Me Rhonda," the record stand out for the ease with which Brian could spring fabulous fantasies. 1965's third LP, *Beach Boys' Party!* was a throwaway, only in that it spawned a huge hit in "Barbara Ann" and gave Brian breathing room to complete his personal opus.

From 1966 on, the Beach Boys recording history would be clouded by constant fighting with Capitol, comparatively few hits and missing links. However, the year got off to a perfect start musically with *Pet Sounds*, one of the few truly essential LPs the group has ever recorded, and the one record we can recommend without any reservation or qualification. You don't need to know anything about Brian Wilson or the Beach Boys to appreciate this album. It's held up better than virtually any pop record made in the '60s; there's nothing even remotely nostalgic about it. The dynamic mono recording is still more sophisticated than even the most involved 48-track stereo digital LP of today. More to the point, the music is incredibly rich and dense, the lyrical expression is honest and evocative and timeless, and all told, it's Brian Wilson's most impressive expression. If you don't own this record, put this magazine down and go buy it and play it ten times in a row. If you do have it, treat yourself to a new copy.

Brian Wilson's other completed record in 1966 was called "Good Vibrations," Brian Wilson's reputation as a pop artist of the first magnitude was made; simultaneously, Brian was unraveling, and nearly twenty years later, he is still trying to put the pieces together.

There were two other albums on Capitol's 1966 release schedule. The first was *Best Of The Beach Boys*, a fine compilation of the group's early hits that was rushed to the market when it became obvious that Brian's *Pet Sounds* wouldn't be the kind of music that would appeal to the group's original fans. More problematical was the year's non-starter. Due by Christmas, 1966 was an album originally conceived as *Dumb Angel* and later named

Smile. It was never completed, never released, and it remains the most enigmatic era in the group's career. *Smile* is generally considered to be the most famous un-released record in rock history.

What would it have been? Without delving deeply into the mythology and without overstating the case, it would have been one of the most beautiful and ambitious pop records ever made. The track listing included "Good Vibrations," "Heroes and Villains," "Surf's Up," "Cabin Essence," "Our Prayer," "The Elements" (including "I Love To Say Da Da"), "Wonderful," and a number of others which have never been released in any form (with the exception of the basic track for "Fire" which is on the soundtrack of the poorly-constructed home video, "The Beach Boys: An American Band").

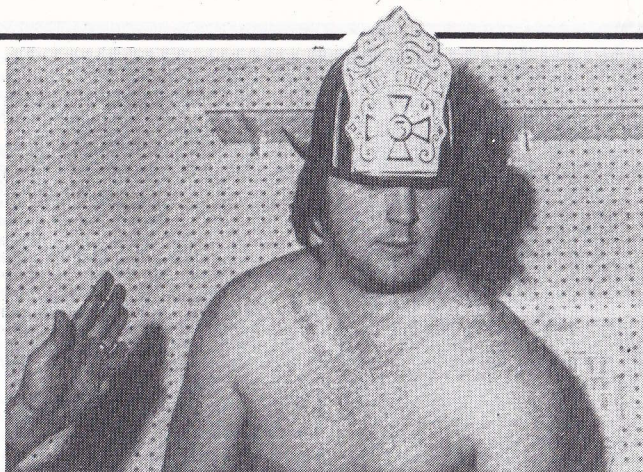
The *Smile* recordings have eked out over the years; invariably they've been the highlights of whatever album they've been on, regardless of their incomplete and/or reworked form. Additionally, there have been two *Smile* bootlegs which have the highlights of the "works in progress" from that period. The death of *Smile* however, didn't just mean the loss of one album; it marked the symbolic end of Brian Wilson's tenure as leader of the Beach Boys. Because instead of *Smile*, produced by Brian Wilson, the public got *Smiley Smile*, produced by the Beach Boys. If *Smile* is the most famous unreleased (and overhyped) album in history, the *Smiley Smile* was probably the most disappointing record ever released by a major band. As Carl Wilson later admitted, *Smiley Smile* was "a bunt instead of a grand slam."

The fact that *Smiley Smile* is on the essential list is another example of the strength that *Smile* possessed, even though Carl's analogy is accurate. However, it is with this album, released in 1967, that we begin to almost always talk about Beach Boys records in qualified terms. The loss of *Smile* put an irreparable hole both in Brian Wilson's public artistry and more important, in his heart, and he has never again fully mustered all his considerable skills for an entire album.

That doesn't mean that there haven't been more Beach Boys records worth owning; it just means that the best of the rest are those on which Brian's involvement was most prominent. *Smiley Smile*, released in September '67, had been preceded by an impatient Capitol Records with *Best Of The Beach Boys Vol. II* (both of the first two *Best Of...* records are good and in-print).

Smiley Smile and *Wild Honey* (which came only three months later) are incredibly under-produced records coming on the heels of Brian's 1966 work. They're interesting and essential, particularly taken within the context of Brian's too-rapidly evolving psychodrama. (An A+ for Capitol; the re-issues of these are in perfect mono.)

In 1968, the Beach Boys released two new albums *Friends*, Brian's favorite album and one that is regarded with great fondness by we Beach Boys obsessives, is an essential look at an artist in peaceful retreat. And '68's *Stack-O-Tracks* is Beach Boys records without vocals; that is, Brian Wilson's arranging skills are



Brian Wilson at Gold Star Studios during - the "Fire" sessions November 28th, 1966 - Photo by Jasper Dailey (the Peter Reum Collection)

showcased in this incredibly unusual and unique collection of backing tracks.

The group's last new Capitol release, *20-20*, is a mixed-bag of singles and archival material, and it, as well as the previous two disks, is essential. Included on *20-20* are some of the *Smile* fragments, Carl Wilson's first solo effort, the perfectly realized "I Can Hear Music," the Charles Manson/Dennis Wilson collaboration "Never Learn Not To Love," and two from Brian's autobiographical collection, "Time To Get Alone" and "I Went To Sleep," two more examples that show "what could have been" in an incredibly "deep and wide" way.

In terms of Capitol, that would be it for the Beach Boys; with the exception of the already-discussed endless flood of re-issues and repackages, the Capitol years was a closed chapter. Of note in this regard is a fine boxed set, appropriately titled *The Capitol Years* which is a near-perfect chronology of most of the key tracks we've talked about thus far. As the American Capitol repackaged sets have a random nature of song order and track selection, making it virtually impossible to get a true reading of Brian's development as a pop artist, the import *The Capitol Years* shows how it should be done. Intelligently and thoughtfully put together, this set could almost fulfill your Beach Boys needs from the '60s (although you really must have *Pet Sounds* all by itself).

Additionally, the original version of this boxed set came with a bonus record, the Brian Wilson productions, which is important because of "Guess I'm Dumb" (that's David and Peter agreeing) and three Honeys' songs, "The One You Can't Have," "Goodnight My Love," and "Tonight, You Belong To Me" (these are Peter's picks). The boxed set and the productions album are now available separately as Japanese imports. (Editor's Note: The boxed set also comes with superb liner notes by Peter Reum, co-author of this article).

From 1970-1973, the Beach Boys, with and

without Brian Wilson made four records that comprise the group's attempts to produce work in the style of Brian's ambitious efforts. Essential albums from this era are *Sunflower* (the best realized group album ever), *Surf's Up* and *Holland* (the hardest to find of the "essential" list). On all three, Brian Wilson's gift is in evidence, but it's during this time that younger brother Dennis indicates that he too has an important talent. Unfortunately, Dennis never really devoted himself to his music as Brian had done. Also, make sure that when you find *Holland*, it includes the bonus EP called "Mt. Vernon and Fairway." This is Brian's fairytale look at his life, and includes his last great music presented in the most frustrating fragments we've ever heard.

Also noteworthy from this time is *Live in London*, the best of the group's three concert records, and now in stores under the title *Beach Boys '69*. It's a great performance from their first jukebox days, and shows how well they once could sing live.

Believe it or not, in the past dozen years, the Beach Boys have released only one new album that we can call essential... Brian's bizarre, charming and ultimately incomplete "solo" record, *The Beach Boys Love You*, an album as full of promise as it is of disappointment. The other five studio releases are more or less forgettable except for a track here and there, and only we Beach Boys fanatics need to know and have these disks.

Of more interest in Brian Wilson's unreleased music from this period, notably the *Adult Child* album with its two standards, "It's Over Now" and "Still I Dream Of It." This material is available from collectors or on a hard-to-find bootleg, but it's worth seeking out in that it shows that Brian Wilson in 1977 still had his gift; but that because he didn't exercise any power, the music remained unheard.

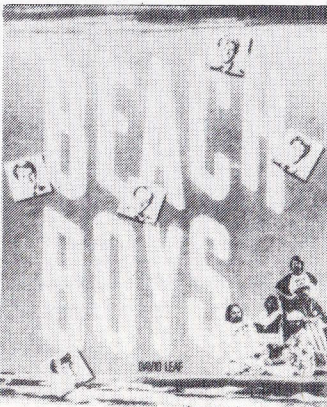
The Beach Boys, the group's current album and it's first in over five years, is eminently listenable and sadly irrelevant. Ironically, the

only essential track from this new album is the "A" side of the single, "Getcha Back," which showcases Brian Wilson's still-commercial singing talent. The "B" side of the single isn't on the album; "Male Ego," despite its lyric, is the most spirited recording Brian Wilson has made since the early '70s.

What lies in the future for the group and Brian Wilson is unknown. It seems that Brian is preparing to make his first official solo album, and it is within that record that we expect to hear our faith rewarded. The past dozen years have been mostly years of drought, and we look forward to a thunderstorm of music... sensitive, personal music from the bumper crop of new songs that Brian's written... songs that will be, we hope, the kind we've come to know, love and expect from this most talented and troubled artist. If this record is made, it will be "essential."

For those of you who are going to embark on your first journey through Brian Wilson's music, we can only express envy at the new joy you will soon experience... the kaleidoscope of emotions that Brian's music will evoke in you. For both of us, Brian Wilson's music has become a major touchstone in our lives. Neither of us can forget the first time we heard *Pet Sounds* or *Sunflower*... the excitement of discovering a hidden gem like "Breakaway"... the excitement with which we still anticipate new Beach Boys releases with the expectation that this time, our faith will be rewarded. We can safely say that if you follow our list, there will be few disappointments, only the magic of one of our generations most talented composers.

(Editor's Note: The authors of this article are the acknowledged experts in the Beach Boys world. Peter Reum, in addition to the liner notes on *The Capitol Years* boxed set, is also the proprietor of the Beach Boys archives, the largest privately held collection of Beach Boys memorabilia in the world. He also authored "The Compleat Beach Boys," a series on the Beach Boys recorded history which appeared in *Pet Sounds* magazine, which was published by the other author of this article, David Leaf. Leaf is also known for his classic biography of the group, the critically-acclaimed *The Beach Boys and The California Myth*, which was originally released in 1978. Recently, Leaf finished an extensive update of that book which has just been published—titled *The Beach Boys*—by Running Press as part of its hardcover Courage Books line.



SELECTED BEACH BOYS DISCOGRAPHY

The following is the list of the "essential" Beach Boys:

TITLE	CATALOGUE #	RELEASE DATE	AVAILABILITY
<i>All Summer Long</i>	Capitol T2110	July 1964	Re-issue in print *
<i>The Beach Boys Today!</i>	Capitol T 2269	March 1965	Re-issue in print as <i>Dance, Dance, Dance</i> *
<i>Summer Days (And Summer Nights!)</i>	Capitol T2354	July 1965	Re-issue in print as <i>California Girls</i> *
<i>Pet Sounds</i>	Capitol T2458	May 1966	Re-issue in print
<i>Smiley Smile</i>	Brother T9001	Sept. 1967	Re-issue in print
<i>Wild Honey</i>	Capitol T2859	Dec. 1967	Re-issue in print
<i>Stack-O-Tracks</i>	Capitol ST2893	August 1968	Recent re-issue Import (without the booklet that comes with original release) is now out-of-print.
<i>Friends</i>	Capitol ST2895	June 1968	Re-issue in print
<i>20-20</i>	Capitol SKAO 133	February 1969	Re-issue in print
<i>Beach Boys '69</i>	Capitol 11584 (Original release on UK Capitol ST21715)	May 1970	Originally released as import only, titled <i>Live in London</i> .
<i>Sunflower</i>	Brother/Reprise 6382	August 1970	Available only as a British Import in cut-outs bins
<i>Surf's Up</i>	Brother/Reprise 6453	August 1971	Available only as a British Import in cut-out bins.
<i>Holland</i>	Brother/Reprise 2118	January 1973	Released with a bonus EP; This album is out-of-print.
<i>Love You</i>	Brother/Reprise 2258	April 1977	Out-of-print, should be in cut-out bins.
<i>Getcha Back/Male Ego</i>	Caribou/CBS ZS4 04913	May 1985	This 45 RPM comes with picture sleeve and non-LP "B" side.

* These re-issues are missing selections that were on the original releases, so when possible, opt for an import (or even a used copy) that has a track order identical to what Brian Wilson originally created.

Catalogue numbers are on original releases. Re-issues have different catalogue numbers.

The following are the best of the repackages of the group's catalogue.

TITLE	CATALOGUE #	RELEASE DATE	AVAILABILITY
<i>Endless Summer</i> (2 record set)	Capitol 11307	June 1974	Still in print
<i>Spirit of America</i> (2 record set)	Capitol 11384	April 1975	Still in print
<i>Sunshine Dream</i> (2 record set)	Capitol 12220	June 1982	Still in print

The Capitol Years

This album was custom-designed for Britain's World Record Club, and it was never released in the United States. However, it is available as a Japanese import.

The Brian Wilson Productions

This record was originally included in the above-mentioned World Record Club set. It is now available only as a single disk, Japanese import.

<i>Ten Years of Harmony</i> (2 record set)	Caribou/CBS 37455	October 1981	May be hard to find but should be available in its American pressing.
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(OR WORDS OF WILSON WIT AND WISDOM)

Although essentially shy and retiring, Brian Wilson has, over the years, been persuaded to grace the American airways by way of radio and TV interviews. The following quotes make interesting reading, though it is sometimes difficult to establish whether the comments were made with tongue in cheek or foot in mouth...

"I took over production from my father in June, maybe May of 1964. In the recording studio I shoved my father; we had been arguing and I told him to leave. He never came back."

"Starting with ("California Girls") we had a kind of electricity - it is just as though something had touched the group with a magic touch, with a wand."

"I stumbled across the idea of environmental ... that word environment came into my mind and I thought, "what do I want this environment to be like?" And I said "I want sand, give me sand" y'know. The sandbox was in the living room; it had about a foot and a half of sand in it... it did great things for my head."

"We received great inspiration from the psychedelic movement but our growth was not really parallel to the psychedelic movement although I think a couple of things we did on albums were rather psychedelic. Like that "Woody Woodpecker Symphony" thing on our SMILEY SMILE was a psychedelic experience."

"Course we believed in Jesus Christ. Some of our stuff indicates the presence of Jesus Christ in our music which I have been responsible for coming up with. I think that the Christ sound in the harmonics... has opened up souls to glorious music."

"It's amazing, here I am rapping my head off... I like food - creative food."

"Let me just lapse right in from out of nowhere subconsciously into a little subject called weight loss. How do you lose weight? Well - mathematics. When you take calories away, mathematically speaking, the weight goes away."

"There has been meditation which we all took heed of, and what has happened is that it's changed our lifestyles. It's given us a little cultivation of peace, better thinking, our minds are clearer. It hasn't changed our music so much 'cause, like I've said before, Jesus Christ had touched our music years ago."

"Meditation has given us a higher awareness of diet."

"I say okay, it's time to go into the studio and let's see if we can write a song - oops, no song came today. Well, let's see, we'll try it tomorrow. Tomorrow it happens, you know. There's also the attitude, you sit down, let's grind it out - we'll sit down and pound one out. Well that works too, but you gotta have a lot of balls. I'm a person that, by and large, goes on the grind theory, just like a machine grinds out its tools, like a computer grinds out its, er, things - a human being grinds out ideas."

"We grind 'em out... we have what you call the grind situation down here, we grind 'em rather than just do 'em."

"You see, when you write - sometimes writers will write, just bang a song out till they have it. With me I'm an impulsive person; I don't believe in sitting down and cranking 'em out because with me it doesn't satisfy."

"What makes me laugh? Er, arguments."



Alan Jardine & Steve Douglas, 2nd October 1987. Photo by Les Chan.



Bruce Johnston with Dennis Wilson in the background, late 60s.

Photo by Alan Poole.

The remix of PET SOUNDS was finished in the first week of March. Brian remastered it with the help of Capitol's digital engineer Larry Walsh and it will definitely be out on CD only including "Hang On To Your Ego (the track that eventually became "I Know There's An Answer")". Release date 'pending' but no firm date given as yet.

A member of the company's staff who was slightly involved with the remixing said that apart from the new track, the final version sounds exactly the same as the original analogue copy.

After finishing PET SOUNDS, Brian and Larry began work on SMILE and nobody yet knows how much progress has yet been made on its completion. Jeff Foskett said all the completed songs apart from two have been released. Capitol have agreed to let me know of any further developments. Staff involved in the project are said to be very excited and aim to have the CD out later this year.

Jan Berry is to appear with the Beach Boys during the Las Vegas gigs in April.

Jan & Dean's Coke jingle has resurfaced in a new Coca Cola compilation album spotted recently in Virgin records which features scores of artists who have done similar recordings over the years.

Bam Caruso Records of St Albans are considering the release of a newly-mixed Batman single featuring the Jan & Dean track overdubbed with dialogue from the Meet Batman which this company has just reissued - believed to be the first re-release of an original J & D album in the UK. Final negotiations are taking place with DC Comics for copyright of the Batman name. It is understood that EMI were approached for a deal on the single but offered lousy terms so Bam Caruso may put it out themselves.

ROBIN JONES

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